SPECIAL PRE-LABOR DAY ISSUE

AMERICAN FEDERATION OF LABOR

WEEKLY NEWS SERVICE

The A. F. of L. Weekly News Service gives news accounts and editorial interpretations of matters affecting labor everywhere in the industrial, legislative and political fields, and contains other information of benefit to the trade union movement.

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WHOLE NO. 1533 WILLIAM GREEN, President GEORGE MEANY, Secretary-Treasurer WASHINGTON, D. C., TUESDAY, AUGUST 27, 1940 VOL .30, NO. 35

FACING the FACTS

With PHILIP PEARL

On this Labor Day, when the workers of America have need more than ever before of unity and solidarity and strength, their forces are thus stubbornly divided.

Nevertheless, there is justification for hope. Peace is nearing. The one man who has been responsible for the original split and who has stubbornly kept organized labor in a state of war since 1935 is on the way out. We refer, of course, to John L. Lewis. And when we say that he is on the way out, it is equivalent to saying that the CIO is on the way out.

A glance at the record shows the veracity of this prediction. When the CIO was born five years ago it consisted of a committee of eight members. These were John L. Lewis, Sidney Hillman, Charles P. Howard, David Dubinsky, Thomas F. McMahon, Harvey C. Fremming, Max Zaritsky, and Thomas H. Brown.

Mr. Howard, after being defeated for re-election as President of the International Typographical Union, succumbed to illness and died. Mr. Dubinsky, President of the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union, stayed with the CIO until he got thoroughly disgusted with Lewis' policies, then quit and recently rejoined the American Federation of Labor with great rejoicing. Mr. McMahon, who was President of the United Textile Workers Union, was forced out of office by Lewis and has retired into obscurity. Mr. Fremming, then President of the Oil Workers, couldn't get along with Lewis and was dumped into a minor position in his union. Mr. Zaritsky, President of the Hatters, Cap and Millinery Workers, dropped the CIO like a hot potato and rejoined the AFL. Mr. Brown, then President of the Mine, Mill and Smelter Workers, stayed with the CIO but faded completely out of the picture in his own union.

Humpty-Dumpty Had a Great Fall

Thus, after just five years, only two of the original founders of the CIO are still active and prominent. These are Lewis and Hillman. And they are now engaged in a bitter feud for control of the organization because they were completely opposed to each other on all major policies.

Doesn't this story have some significance? Doesn't the rapid dissolution of the original CIO leadership spell a fundamental weakness? Isn't there an important lesson labor can learn from this fiasco?

The lesson is a fundamental one—no labor organization can exist without democracy. The weakness the CIO was that it segregated democracy. It had its basis in a denial of the principle of majority rule. It was operated autocratically. For a year or so it flourished under the dictatorship of Lewis. Then it quickly began to disintegrate. It is still falling apart in all directions.

Lewis is still trying to put Humpty-Dumpty back together again. But he cannot succeed any more than all the King's horses and all the King's men. The pieces won't stick together. They don't even want to.

Forward March!

Before the year out, Lewis will be thrown out of the CIO by Hillman or vice versa. If Hillman wins, it is certain that peace negotiations with the CIO will be promptly resumed and brought to a successful conclusion. If Lewis purges Hillman from the CIO, his organization will remain merely an empty shell.

Therefore, we say that on this Labor Day America's workers have reason to look forward hopefully to ultimate peace in the American labor movement. The American Federation of Labor stands ready and willing to compose any differences that still exist in the interests of harmony and unity. It is willing to go more than half way.

The fate of the CIO should be encouraging to all true believers in democracy. It is our conviction that the people of Europe will not endure forever their sufferings under the dictatorships of Hitler, Stalin and Mussolini. Force cannot suppress the human demand for liberty and justice indefinitely. Autocracy is just another name for enslavement. The only system that is strong and lasting is that which rules by consent of the governed and not by compulsion, by intimidation, by assassination and by hate.

We, who have faith, believe in the progressive principle. There have been other occasions in history when progress appeared blockaded and the world seemed to be going backward. But these have been merely detours in the road. The human race, from the beginning of time, has moved in one direction—forward. Hitler, Stalin and Mussolini cannot stop that onward march. They will be trampled under it.

AFL Membership Breaks All Records, Gains Wide Benefits, Reports Meany

Wages Higher, Hours Shorter, Thousands of New Contracts Signed During Year.

By GEORGE MEANY
Secretary-Treasurer, American Federation of Labor

The strength of the American labor movement, as represented by the American Federation of Labor, is greater on this Labor Day of 1940 than it has ever been. The actual paid membership of our organization is today more than 4,300,000, as compared with a membership of only a few thousands in the year of the first Labor Day celebration, back in 1882.

During the last year the labor movement has successfully continued to carry on its efforts to achieve a better day for the wage-earners of our great country.

Despite the activities of anti-labor forces designed to impair the effectiveness of trade-union efforts, the American Federation of Labor has pressed forward as ever, organizing, bargaining, counseling, consistently push' g the American standard of living higher and higher.

During the year the organizations affiliated with the American Federation of Labor have obtained thousands of contracts calling for good wages and decent, American working conditions. In the legislative field, labor has also registered gains since we last celebrated Labor Day, although advances in legislation have been considerably fewer than in recent years.

Those who sought to destroy the American Federation of Labor by setting up a dual organization have encountered a rapidly growing revulsion toward their tactics on the part of all American workers—those still unorganized as well as those already in the labor movement and enjoying the manifold benefits of organization.

Recently this mounting revulsion to those responsible for the continuance of the division in organized labor took concrete form in the reunification of one of the largest international unions, the International Ladies' Garment Workers Union, thus bringing back into the American Federation of Labor a total of 250,000 workers.

This action on the part of the Garment Workers has re-awakened the hope that the day is not far distant when all labor in America will be reunited in a strong, vigorous movement under the banner of the American Federation of Labor. Experience has taught us that unity is desirable. Present-day world conditions make it imperative. The situation in the world indicates that the strength of labor in America is imperative. I hope and trust that unity will be achieved before another Labor Day rolls around.

Despite the many gains made, I believe there can be no more appropriate message to the workers of the nation on this Labor Day of 1940 than the Labor Day messages of the years that Samuel Gompers almost two decades ago.

"Organize! Organize! Organize!" was the Labor Day message of the late president of the American Federation of Labor in 1922.

We have come a long distance on the organizational road since Samuel Gompers voiced this exhortation, but I believe that our job is only begun. There are still millions of men and women workers in this land of ours who are selling their services under miserable working conditions, with no security and little hope.

Trade unionism, which has brought good wages, short hours, vacations with pay, job tenure and many other benefits to millions, can bring these same good things to those other millions who are still being ground into the dirt.

As I see it, it is our solemn duty to carry the gospel of trade unionism to these workers, so that they may benefit, so that the American labor movement may become more and more potent force than it is today and so that this nation may become better and greater through the increased well-being and prosperity of its people.

The fact that we can, on each Labor Day for the last ten years, the problem of unemployment hangs over us like a shadow. This problem still calls most urgently for attention.

It is clear that the way to end the unemployment situation would be by putting the unemployed back to work in private industry, where the workers now jobless can once again find opportunity to toil and earn and become consumers of the products of industry.

The American Federation of Labor has proposed a constructive program for the solution of the unemployment problem through cooperation between management, labor and government. The A. F. of L. is continuing to push for the adoption of this program as a means of putting millions of unemployed back to work.

For sixty years the American Federation of Labor has served as an instrument through which workers have given expression to their basic economic hopes and aspirations. Rival organizations came on the scene, functioned temporarily, then fell apart and passed away.

The American Federation of Labor has endured because it has embraced a sound economic philosophy and because it is an American institution builded upon a solid foundation of devotion and loyalty to our democratic form of governmental principles of America.

Now our nation finds itself in a critical situation as a result of the onward march of totalitarian aggressors. The wage-earners of the land, as represented by the American Federation of Labor, are whole-heartedly in favor of national defense. Much is expected of us and, as patriotic Americans, we shall do our part as we have always done in the past. However, we cannot permit selfish interests to use the false pretext of labor shortages or any other equally specious claims to break down the standards which it has taken labor many years to build up.

The American Federation of Labor will continue its efforts to promote human betterment by following a course in harmony with the best traditions of our American life, and I am confident that when Labor Day rolls around again in 1941 we shall once more be able to point to the substantial results with some from carrying on such efforts.

In conclusion, I would again stress the vital importance of taking to heart and acting upon the advice of Samuel Gompers:

"Organize! Organize! Organize!"

BEWARE PANACEAS ROSEMUND WARNS

By C. L. ROSEMUND
President, International Federation of Technical Engineers, Architects, and Draftsmen's Unions, A.F.L.

In this country today there are those who advocate the adoption of pressure groups to secure legislative redress of all social evils. Some of this proposed course is certainly sound but so as to virtually fly in the face of Providence. When this procedure is carried beyond a certain point it is inevitable "crack up" is bound to follow and then democracy dies and there usually follows a totalitarian state with its blood purges and other terrors.

So when the troubles multiply for 1940 and when strife and turmoil beset Labor and Industry, let the workers keep their eyes on the ball and their heads. Note if they are genuinely American in the policies which they endorse or if they are just climbing up some of the discredited policies imported from some of the unfortunate countries of the Old World. See if there is not something in the policies which they advocate which will promote the necessary springboard for personal political preferment. Then be on guard against the alien politics and traditions that have made these United States the envy of the rest of the world.

SIGNALMEN BAR REDS, NAZIS

Denver, Colo.—Communists, Nazis and Fascists were barred from membership in the Brotherhood of Railroad Signalmen by the Brotherhood's 25th annual convention here.

FREY HITS REDS AS FIFTH COLUMN

By JOHN P. FREY
President, AFL Metal Trades Department

The most dangerous of all Fifth Columns in our country today is the one controlled and directed by Moscow. Since Lenin conceived his scheme for world-wide revolution, agents of Communists directed and controlled from Moscow, have labored unceasingly and ceaselessly to infiltrate into our trade union movement. The immediate menace to our nation arises in the ranks of organized labor until it was able to capture a controlling position within the C. I. O.

As citizens we must be on constant guard against Fifth Column activities within our country. As trade unionists we must be particularly on our guard against the Communist Fifth Columns, working to infiltrate into our unions, for their directors are cruel, cunning, treacherous and without conscience. The Communist who secures membership in our local unions is not interested in trade union problems and policy. His sole interest is in shaping the policy of the local union, and the policy of the national union, in adopting policies and carrying on activities which will be in line with the purpose of the Russian controlled Communist movement in the United States.

In view of the national emergency which has been created because of the onslaught of Germany upon the free peoples of Europe, we must be on guard night and day so that no representative of a foreign country will be permitted to in any manner influence trade union policy in the United States.

Trade union policy, Communist and dictator style, for as far apart as justice and injustice, honesty and dishonesty, patriotism and treachery. There is no place in our American institutions for the Communist, or his policies, his so-called ideologies, or his tactics. Our watchword must be, "Out with the Communists and dictators, and up with the banner of American trade unionism!"

Labor Day Briefs

LABOR DAY ORIGINATED BY PETER J. McGUIRE

Labor Day as a special holiday for the workers was originated by Peter J. McGuire, founder of the United Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners of America. He suggested the idea to the New York City Central Labor Union in the Spring of 1882. The union agreed with the plan and arranged the first observance with a big parade and festival on Tuesday, September 5, 1882. Two years later the union decided to hold the celebration on the first Monday in September, and urged other central labor bodies throughout the nation to set up that day as "a universal holiday for workingmen."

N. Y. CITY WITNESSED FIRST LABOR DAY FETE

The first celebration of Labor Day was held in New York City on September 5, 1882, under the sponsorship of the Central Labor Union. The celebration took place with parade of the affiliated unions, which was reviewed at Union Square by a large number of labor leaders, and ended with a big picnic and festival in Elm Park. P. J. McGuire, founder of Labor Day, was among those who reviewed the parade.

NATIONAL LABOR DAY LAW SPONSORED BY A. F. OF L.

The campaign to secure legislation making Labor Day a national holiday began in the 1884 convention of the American Federation of Labor which unanimously adopted the following resolution introduced by Delegate C. Cassens of the Chicago Trades and Labor Alliance:

"Resolved, That the first Monday in September of each year be set apart as a laborers' national holiday, and that we recommend its observance by all wage workers, irrespective of sex, calling or nationality."

By 1887 the legislatures of twenty-three States had enacted Labor Day laws, and 1922 the roll was completed by Wyoming, which had enacted the national Labor Day law in 1894.

LABOR DAY MADE LEGAL HOLIDAY BY CONGRESS

The law making the first Monday in September of each year a legal holiday was enacted by Congress in 1894. Identical bills to this effect were introduced in the House of Representatives by Representative Amos J. Cummings, of New York City, and in the Senate by Senator James H. Kyle of South Dakota. The bill was passed both houses unanimously and was signed by President Grover Cleveland on June 28, 1894.

VICTORY FOR LABOR DAY LAW NOTED BY GOMPERS

The victory of the American Federation of Labor in securing enactment of the Labor Day law by Congress was noted by President Samuel Gompers in his report to the 1894 A. F. of L. convention. He said:

"National Labor Day.—It affords me pleasure to be able to report that the demand made by the American Federation of Labor for making the first Monday in September of each year a legal holiday passed Congress and was made a law on June 28, 1894."

LABOR DAY LAWS ENACTED IN FORTY-EIGHT STATES

Between 1887 and 1923 every one of the forty-eight States, as well as the territories, insular possessions and the District of Columbia, enacted laws making Labor Day a legal State holiday.

The first state law was enacted by Oregon in 1887; the legislature designated the first Saturday in June. The next year, but later changed the date to the first Monday in September. Colorado followed in 1887 with legislation in 1887 were Colorado, Massachusetts, New Jersey and New York. Nebraska followed in 1888 and by enacting a Labor Day law in 1923.

GOMPERS RECEIVED LABOR DAY LAW PEN

Congressman Amos J. Cummings of New York, who acted for with Senator James H. Kyle of South Dakota, of the bill making the first Monday in September a national holiday took the bill passed by both Houses of Congress to President Grover Cleveland for approval on June 28, 1894. Mr. Cummings presented the pen and holder used by the President in signing the bill to President Samuel Gompers of the American Federation of Labor.

'Save America by Bolstering Unions,' Green Tells Workers on Labor Day

AFL President's Message Stresses Dependence of Democracy on Free Trade Unions.

By WILLIAM GREEN
President, American Federation of Labor

In these moving times when that which gives value to our lives and civilization lies in the balance, this observance of Labor Day takes on a new urgency and a new obligation. Labor Day is in Labor's economic world what Independence Day is in our political life. Labor Day typifies the status which Labor has secured through union organization. For the wage earner finding his union means finding the way to those industrial rights which are the basis for justice and freedom in that important part of life spent in earning a livelihood. We know that if we exercise political freedom we must also have economic freedom. The trade union is Labor's economic declaration of independence.

The union assures that basic right—representation. Through representation the union can present its views, influence decisions, and suggest ways and means for dealing with problems. The right to representation, whether in labor unions, in political bodies, in special groups or in decisions on work terms and standards, is the provision essential to individual initiative and feeling of justice and self-reliance. Representation implies rights and status and lays the foundation for a continuous program for betterment.

Representatives must be designated by those represented. This alone gives them authority to act.

Free trade unions and democratic institutions are inseparable and grow from the same ideals of liberty.

Liberty cannot be given to any individual, group or nation. It must be achieved and maintained by those concerned. This implies responsibility and discipline on the part of those who are members and officials of free organizations as well as those who constitute a democratic people. We can be sure of preserving our rights only as we exercise them wisely and resist encroachments on them.

By common consent priority has now been granted to defense production. One and all agree that we can fight a revolution of destruction only with force. The keys to defense equipment are adequate arms, mechanized troops and ships. Our problem is to get equipment with the speed necessitated by the imminent danger.

Measures and agencies planning to undertake production required for our defense program, have been united on two demands: First, that their industries should be allowed to write off the cost of plant expansion for defense production within five years with a rate of depreciation and obsolescence; and secondly, the elimination of restrictions upon hours of work because of an alleged labor shortage. In the case of munitions the Government is planning to build the plants and lease them to the producing companies.

In accord with this background of protection the manufacturers against undue costs, are legal regulations to pay workers overtime in excess of the maximum standard of 40 hours provided by the Walsh-Healey Act and 42 hours in the Fair Labor Standards Act. The regulation does not prohibit longer hours but insures workers against long hours at undue expense to them.

On Labor Day 1940 we can rejoice in progress even during a period of depression and conflict. Our union membership is at an all-time peak. Employed workers have made progress despite the depression. Approximately 700,000 union workers have gained the 30-hour week while the average work week for all dropped from 50 to 40; hourly earnings increased 20 per cent and the cost of living rose but 10 per cent. But increased cost for the employed is offset by the number unemployed who are denied places to earn a living in our business structure. When we learn that during these decade productivity has increased 50 per cent, we realize that upon a return to normal conditions the 30-hour week must be established for all and that industry must be expanded to capacity to provide work opportunities for all and the materials for higher standards of living for all. As labor costs per unit of output have decreased 25 per cent, wage increases could without difficulty reach more nearly approximate the increase in productivity. Sustaining purchasing power in the hands of workers families is necessary to maintain production at capacity. And this is the basic step in solving unemployment which is of our major and most pressing problems blocking the way to prosperity in peace and unity for national defense.

Upon the organized trade union movement rests the responsibility for maintaining labor standards for the welfare and progress for Labor and prosperity for the whole Nation. It is our duty and our mission to maintain the democratic and social standards we have won and to preserve our free trade unions as an organization necessary to government and justice in industry and to democracy in our political government.

The American Federation of Labor, the oldest labor movement of the Western Hemisphere, has a responsibility for helping to preserve free unions in the New World. Without free unions democracy and liberty cannot exist. This solemn duty rests upon the individual members of all unions. Labor Day 1940 should constitute a day of rededication and planning to carry out this high purpose.

Teachers Union Defeats Red Bloc; Counts Victor on Loyalty Platform

Buffalo.—By a vote of two to one, the ticket headed by Professor George S. Counts of Teachers College, Columbia University, was swept into office at the convention of the American Federation of Teachers here. Professor Counts was elected to succeed himself.

The platform on which Professor Counts and his ticket were elected called for an adequate national defense, protection of labor standards, adequate representation of labor in the scheme of national defense, the most rapid possible absorption of the unemployed, maintenance of the social security laws, maintenance of educational standards of academic freedom and preservation of civil liberties.

"All of these are integral factors in adequate defense," the platform said, "and are essential to the preservation and upbuilding of the morale of the people of the nation. We are opposed to totalitarian ideologies whether they appear in the concepts of democracy and we condemn the wars of aggression for imperialistic ends by the totalitarian nations be they Fascist, Nazi or Communist. Fifthness and the idea of the Fifth as a society of free men for which we stand proudly and with a determination to defend it."

"In relation to our own union we stand unequivocally for the right of any citizen, including members of the American Federation of Teachers, to hold any view on political and social questions and to membership in any legal political party, but we strongly condemn and oppose any attempt at manipulation of the American Federation of Teachers, or its organized policies by a Communist group, or any group whose activities in the union are directed primarily toward the furtherance of the ends of agencies, foreign and domestic, external to the union and its policies."

In addressing the convention President Green demanded that the American Federation of Teachers clean its ranks of Communists and "fellow-travelers." He promised that if the convention did so the 1,000 central trades bodies of the A. F. of L. and the federations of the forty-eight States would back the American Federation of Teachers in its objective of organizing the teachers of the country.

One immediate consequence of the victory of the Counts group, it was stated, will be a "house cleaning" in Local 5 in New York City.

A statement made here by George Googe, personal representative of President Green at the convention, declared that the election of the Counts group "opens the road for a thorough cleaning of the high courts of the United States along lines paralleling the purposes of the American Federation of Labor."

All Aid For Britain Short of War Urged by Green as Defense Step

Washington, D. C.—President William Green of the American Federation of Labor, declared in a Labor Day "all support of Great Britain short of war" in the present European conflict, in an address at the convention banquet of the International Photo Engravers' Union.

Pledging the A. F. of L. to "give to the Government its full measure of support in the national defense program," President Green said the labor body is opposed to conscription until voluntary enlistment is first tried out by the Government.

"First we should know the manpower needs of the nation," he said. "We should raise the army in the accepted and American way—first call for volunteer enlistment, then if it is imperative to mobilize a large enough army, we should be willing to see conscription enacted."

Stating that the A. F. of L. recognized the need of a "greater navy," Mr. Green said it favors "development of adequate national defense.

"We are willing that the great American should work toward the defense of the American continent. But we are opposed to America becoming involved in a foreign conflict and sending troops abroad."

Green discussed the rift of the A. F. of L. and the C. I. O., and stated that a committee of the A. F. of L. "stands ready now to meet anytime, any time with a committee of the C. I. O. to bring about a settlement.

"Responsibility for the split within the ranks of labor rests squarely on the shoulders of the rival rebel leader who led the revolt.

He declared that "When labor presents a solid front either politically or economically there is no power in America that can ever defeat it united and solid."

Edward J. Volz, president of the union, discussed its growth in a brief address of welcome. Matthew Woll, vice president of the union, called for the union of all labor and warned that "Should Great Britain lose its battle all of us will be in danger of losing our liberties and government."

Volz was reelected president of the union; Woll first vice president; Frank Swain second vice president; William C. Gouby, third vice president, and Henry F. Schmall, secretary-treasurer.

TEXT OF NATIONAL LABOR DAY LAW

The following is the text of the Labor Day Law enacted by Congress and signed by President Cleveland in 1894:

Be it enacted, etc., That the first Monday in September of each year, being the day known and celebrated as labor's holiday, is hereby made a legal public holiday, for all intents and purposes, in the same manner as Christmas, the 1st day of January, the 22d of February, the 30th of May and the 4th day of July are now by law made public holidays.

GREEN SPEAKS IN DENVER ON LABOR DAY

President William Green of the American Federation of Labor will speak in Denver, Colo., on Labor Day to the assembled workers. His address will be delivered from the Denver City and County Building facing the Civic Center accommodating an audience of 50,000 and will be broadcast over a nation-wide hook-up by the National Broadcasting System from 1:00 to 1:30 p. m. Mountain time, which is 2:00 to 2:30 p. m. Eastern Standard time and 4:00 to 4:30 p. m. Eastern Daylight Saving time.